

## A 2♥ response to a 1♠ opening bid promises a five card suit

After an opening bid of one of a suit, responder can generally bid a new suit at the two level with a 4 card suit, provided that he has 10 or more points (including length points).

The only exception is that a 2♥ response to 1♠ promises a 5 card suit. The main reason is to make it easy to find a 5-3 heart fit, which will normally play better than 3NT.

North 1	North 2	North	East	South	West
♠ K Q J 7 5	♠ Q 9 8 7 5	1♠	P	2♥	P
♥ A 4 2	♥ A Q 2	?			
♦ 9 5	♦ Q J				
♣ K 6 3	♣ A J 3				

If the 2♥ response could be a four card suit, North 1 might be tempted to rebid 2♠; North 2 would probably bid 2NT. With an assured 8+ heart fit both North 1 and North 2 can happily raise to 3♥.

What happens when the responder to a 1♠ opening has only four hearts? Most of the time he will have a four card minor which can be bid instead. When responder doesn't bid the four card heart suit, a 4-4 heart fit will rarely be missed because if opener is 5-4 in spades and hearts he will rebid hearts.

South	North	East	South	West
♠ A 7	1♠	P	?	
♥ K Q 8 7				
♦ Q 4 2				
♣ 10 9 5 3				

Responder bids 2♣, giving opener a chance to rebid 2♥ with four hearts, which responder will raise to 3♥. (If opener instead bids 2♦ or 2♠, responder rebids 2NT.)

The only awkward situation occurs when responder's shape is 4333 with four hearts. Responder now has 2 options:

- (a) Bid NT at the appropriate level, or ...
- (b) Respond 2♣ on a 3 card suit (commonly known as 'inventing' a suit).

South	North	East	South	West
♠ A 7 4	1♠	P	2♣	P
♥ Q 10 6 5	3♣			
♦ 10 4 2				
♣ A J 3				

This is not as dangerous as it might seem. If opener rebids 2♦ you can then bid 2♥. If he rebids his spades you can show delayed support with a bid of 3♠. If he bids 2♥ you can pass or invite with 3♥. If he raises 2♣ to 3♣, he will normally have a 5 card spade suit (5-4 in spades and clubs). Responder can therefore go back to spades with a 3♠ bid.